

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00009 031048Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 CU-02 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-04  
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 ABF-01 /052 W  
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R 031015Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1759  
USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0009

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SOPN, SCUL, CZ  
SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTING THE EXCHANGES AGREEMENT, PROPOSAL FOR AN  
AMERICAN READING ROOM IN PRAGUE

USIA FOR IEU

1. IN MARCH 1977, THE US AND GOC WILL DISCUSS IMPLEMENTING THE  
RECENTLY COMPLETED EXCHANGES AGREEMENT. AS PART OF THE PROCESS,  
WE WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE OPENING AN OFF-EMBASSY PREMISES "READING  
ROOM," STOCKED WITH APPROXIMATELY 100 OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT  
AMERICAN JOURNALS IN THE SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, PLUS CURRENT  
NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS MAGAZINES. AS PART OF THE PACKAGE, WE  
WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE A SMALL PAPERBACK "BOOK STORE," STOCKING  
PERHAPS 500 TITLES AT A TIME, AND A RECORD COUNTER WHERE  
AMERICAN RECORDS PLUS MUSIC SCORES MIGHT BE SOLD.

2. SIMILAR FACILITIES ALREADY EXIST HERE. THE FRENCH HAVE AN  
OFF-EMBASSY PREMISES CULTURAL CENTER, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT OFFICIALLY  
RECOGNIZED AS SUCH BY THE GOC. IT CONTAINS A CURRENT PERIODICALS  
READING ROOM, REFERENCE LIBRARY, AND FILM VIEWING ROOM.  
THE FRENCH ALSO HAVE A 40,000 VOLUME LIBRARY, ADMINISTERED JOINTLY  
BY THEM AND CHARLES UNIVERSITY. THE BRITISH HAVE A SMALL OFF-  
SITE SECOND-STORY BRITISH COUNCIL OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN PRAGUE,  
AND A 16,000 VOLUME LIBRARY OF BOOKS IN ENGLISH, ADMINISTERED  
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00009 031048Z

JOINTLY BY CHARLES UNIVERSITY AND THE BRITISH COUNCIL. THE ITALIANS  
HAVE A 200 SEAT THEATER, FILM SHOWING ROOM, LANGUAGE CLASS ROOMS,  
AND 5,000 VOLUME LIBRARY, ALTHOUGH THIS MASSIVE BAROQUE FACILITY,  
LOCATED NEAR THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, OPERATES WITHOUT A FORMAL CULTURAL  
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. WE DO NOT FRANKLY THINK THAT THE GOC WILL BUY THIS PROPOSAL

PER SE, OR IF THEY DO ACCEPT IT, IT WOULD ONLY BE IN MODIFIED FORM, AND PROBABLY THE SUBJECT OF MUCH HARD NEGOTIATING, AS IN FACT WAS THE CASE WITH THE WHOLE EXCHANGES AGREEMENT.

4. STILL, THE AGREEMENT, WHILE ALLOWING ONLY "EXISTING CULTURAL CENTERS," DOES HAVE A PROVISION FOR READING ROOMS, AND THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT MAKES AMPLE PROVISION FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF BOOKS AND MUSICAL MATERIALS. WHY NOT GIVE IT A TRY? IF WE GET ONLY A PORTION OF THE ABOVE PROPOSAL, WE ARE AHEAD OF WHERE WE ARE NOW. IF WE GET NOTHING, WE CAN STILL USE THE PROPOSAL TO BARGAIN FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

5. EVEN IF THE GOC WERE TO ACCEPT A PORTION OF THE ABOVE IDEA, WE DOUBT IF IT COULD BE REALIZED AT ALL DURING 1977.

6. AS FOR FUNDING THE BOOKSTORE-RECORD COUNTER ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL, WE WOULD VALUE WASHINGTON'S ADVICE. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO SELL BOOKS AND RECORDS IN CZECHOSLOVAK CROWNS, AND TO PURCHASE THEM IN DOLLARS. IN THIS REGARD, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE BOOKSTORE TO EXCHANGE LOCAL CURRENCY PROCEEDS FOR DOLLAR INSTRUMENTS THROUGH THE EMBASSY CASHIER. ANY LEGAL AND MANAGERIAL PRECEDENTS THE AGENCY MIGHT HAVE FOR THE OPERATION OF SUCH A PROJECT WOULD BE WELCOME.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: PERMISSION TO INCLUDE THE CONCEPT OF AN OFF-EMBASSY PREMISES PERIODICALS READING ROOM WITH BOOKSTORE-RECORD STORE AS PART OF THE NEGOTIATING PACKAGE.  
BYRNE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CULTURAL PROPERTY, CULTURAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS, TREATY ENTRY INTO FORCE, ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICES, BOOKS, RECORDINGS  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Subject:** IMPLEMENTING THE EXCHANGES AGREEMENT, PROPOSAL FOR AN AMERICAN READING ROOM IN PRAGUE USIA FOR IEU  
**TAGS:** SOPN, SCUL, CZ, US  
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